4/6/72

Dear Jim,

You know that it is joy when I write you a couple of hours before doing a show with an articulate man who will be live when I'm on the horn and I didn't get to borrow a copy of his book until last night. It is 200,000 words, so I've skimmed it what I think is enough and write, if briefly.

I had several reasons for suggesting that you first ask the Doubleday flacks to have him appear, just like that, what they will take as straight. After you get an o.f., you can develop a sudden recall of your personal and your station's edication to the fairness doctrine and its requirement that both sides of controversial issues of national importance be aired by all licensees. Perhaps the murder, per se, is no longer controversial in Doubleday's view but everything related to it, from plea-bargaining up and down, assuredly is. So, with me being the only author of a book on the other side, you are asking me to do that other side by phone, Frank in your studio.

Now if he accepts, you'll have a livelier show. I'll have a better notion of the prospects in a couple of hours. If he does not accept you'll have a real deal, the kind we used to do not check to check in those cramped closets by thigh to thigh (gotta tell you in person what evolved from one of those early Sunday a.m. shows—or Hal can if you tell him it was a young man of mixed ancestry).

Now if there is anything to all that puffery, why in the world should not the movie-maker, the world-famous investigative reporter, pal of Zsa-Zsa et al, want to face down an old chicken farmer? (The line comes from a show he did 4/3, -ong John.)

With a bit of luck, I'll be able to play cassettes of what he said on that show while you and I kick it around. So, you'll have the real Frank, if not quite standing up. I have a friend who taped it and another I've given parts to dub off (both in NYC) from the notes I made while listening here. One and two sentence things.

Anyway, I suggested you tape your conversation in which you ask him to agree to be on the phone. If he agrees, you have lost nothing. If he does not, you can ask why. If they ask about the beeper, if you use it, you are in your studio. The why can't be because they don't want to sell my book. First of all, it has as much right to be sold as their's. And second of all, try it. You can't get it. WTOP tried all over Washington for a TV show done yesterday, and a Yale law prof wrote me that in three months he had not been able to get one. So, I can't profit. And if it sold all in print it would not profit me because enough to assure the advance were not even printed.

Anyway, I think that given a choice, people might prefer chickens farmers to chickens.

Great to hear from you. Best to Mary, all his, and everyone I'd so love to see again.

Sincerely,